

## THE MISERIES OF BEING A GOOD SINGER.

One of the pithy remarks in Lacon, though I cannot remember the precise words, amounts to this; that any man who is an excellent amateur singer, and reaches the age of thirty, without in some way or other feeling the ruinous effects of it, is an extraordinary man. 'True it is, and pity 'tis, 'tis true,' that a quality so pleasing, and one that might be so innocent and so amiable, is often, through the weakness of 'poor human nature,' converted into a bane—a very pest, and occasions it to be remarked, when this miserable result occurs, that a man had better croak like a frog, than be a good singer. That the ruin too frequently occasioned by a man's being a good vocalist, arises from want of resolution, and from his inability to say no, when invited to a feast; or when there, to use the same denying monosyllable when pressed to take another glass, and then—what then?—why, another; cannot be denied; and that such is the manifest and frequent consequence; he who runs may read! A few mornings ago, I was accidentally reading the Morning Herald, in the committee-room belonging to the metropolitan parish of St. —, when my attention was roused by a sort of debate at the table, between the presiding overseer, the master of the workhouse, and a pauper, who wanted permission to go out for a holyday. On raising my head, I discovered in the pauper, a young man, rather above thirty, to describe whose carbuncled face would be impossible, and whose emaciated appearance bespoke premature decay, and the grossest intemperance; whilst the faculties of his mind were evidently shown by his conversation to be as impaired as his body.—To my surprise, I discovered in this shadow of a man, one who had been but a very few years prior to this, in a good business, from which his father had retired with a comfortable fortune, and who is still living reputably in one of the villages adjoining the metropolis. At the time I speak of, I frequently met this young man at the Freemasons', the Crown and Anchor, and other taverns where public dinners are held, and where he was always hailed with rapture, as a second *Braham*; and he really sung very delightfully; but he could not stand the flattery attendant on it, and the hard drinking which he thought necessary, poor fellow, but which is well known to be the singer's greatest enemy. He frequently attended two or three dinners in one day; and in short, he altogether verified the old proverb of 'a short life and a merry one,' and descending in the scale of society step by step, he exchanged his elegant tavern dining for evening clubs and free-and-easys, till, ejected from the public house parlour, he sunk into the frequenter of common tap-rooms, and the associator of the vilest of the vile; he cared not who—and provided he could get liquor to drink, he cared not what. His business had been entirely lost long before this utter degradation; though his friends had from time to time, with great sacrifices, upheld him; and he was at the period spoken of, a pensioner on their bounty, and on the occasional treats still procured by his failing voice; till at length finding he was attacked by a grim disease, and having become so lost to all decency of feeling, as to make it impossible for his friends to take him into their houses, the parish workhouse was his only resource, where he is now paid for by those friends, an older man in constitution than his father, though still, by age, he ought to be numbered with our youths. After he had left the room, the overseer told me that, though he could not find it in his heart to refuse this lost being his request, yet that he knew that he would only go begging round among his old friends and acquaintance, the consequence of

which would, in all probability, be several days of intoxication before his return, when he would again come into the workhouse, in the same sickly state from which, by good care and attention, he had been greatly relieved. Let this communication, every syllable of which is true, sink deeply into the hearts of all my young male readers, who are just entering into life, and who may happen to have tolerable voices. Singing is a beautiful, but as I have shown, a dangerous talent; far be it from me to assert that there are not many good singers, both public and private, who are prudent men; I have only sketched, feebly indeed, and slightly, what *has been* the result of musical talent of this sort, and which, therefore, *may* be the result again, and I have good reason to know, that a fate similar to the one I have related, has befallen many a man besides him of whom I have been writing; whose youthful pride has been to be called a good singer.